

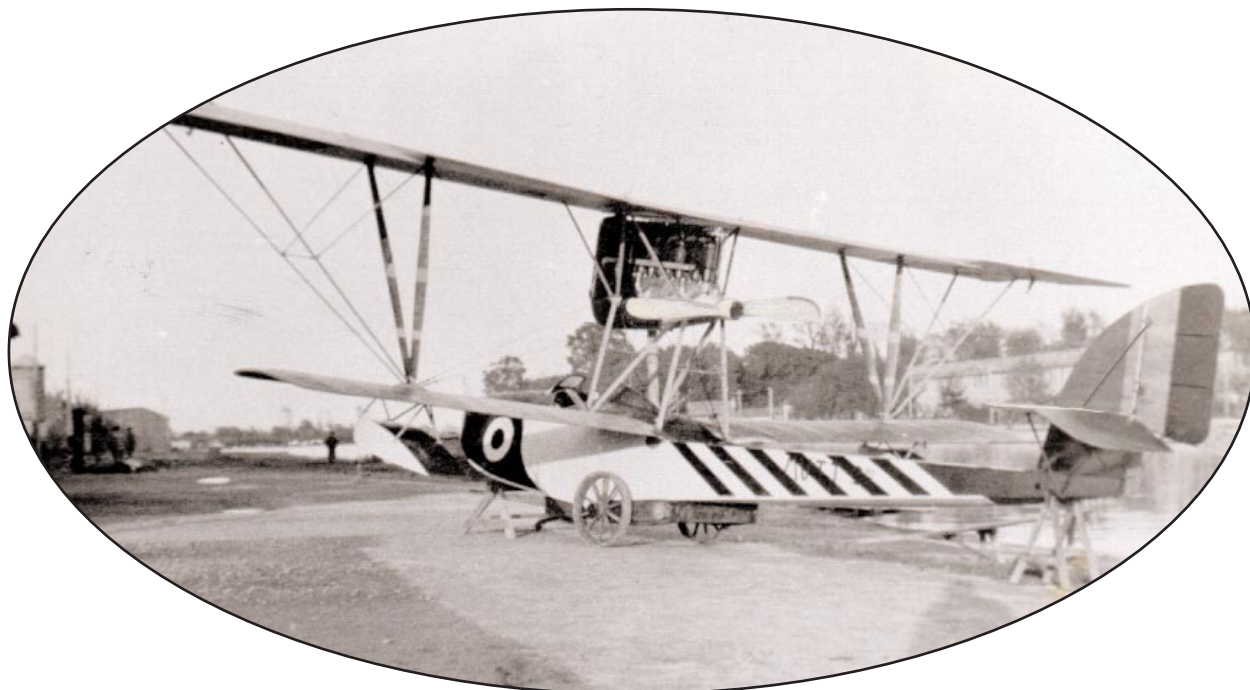
Medal of Honor Recipients for Patrol Aviation

***Ensign Charles Hazeltine Hammann was
awarded the Medal of Honor for his
action on 21 August 1918***

Charles Hazeltine Hammann, Ensign, USNRF
Highest rank: Lieutenant (jg), USN
Born: 16 March 1892, Baltimore, Md.
Died: 14 June 1919
Buried: Oaklawn Cemetery, Baltimore, Md.

After the United States' entry into WWI, the Navy established air stations in Italy, France and England for training and combat operations. NAS Porto Corsini, Italy was very active in conducting attacks against the Austrian naval base at Pola. In an action on 21 August 1918, two Macchi M-8 flying boats were escorted by five Macchi M-5 single-place flying boats for an attack on the Austrian naval base at Pola. In the ensuing combat over Pola, three Austrian aircraft were shot down, and one American M-5s was hit by enemy fire

and forced down. The M-5, flown by Ensign G. H. Ludlow, landed on the water, but immediately came under fire from the Austrian seaplanes. Ensign C. H. Hammann observed Ludlow's aircraft going down and smoking heavily. He broke off combat with the enemy aircraft to land next to his friend's sinking flying boat. Somehow Hammann managed to bring Ludlow aboard his tiny one-man aircraft and was able to take-off from very rough seas. After evading the pursuing Austrian aircraft, the two returned to Porto Corsini to find they had already been listed as Killed in Action! For this heroic act, Ensign Hammann was awarded the Medal of Honor—the first Navy aviator to be so honored. Hammann was killed in a crash at Langley Field, Va, on 14 June 1919. A destroyer named in his honor, *Hammann* (DD 412), was sunk by torpedoes while assisting a damaged *Yorktown* (CV 5) during the Battle of Midway. A second *Hammann* (DE 131) was commissioned on 17 May 1943, and survived many campaigns in the Atlantic before going into the reserve fleet in 1945.



Ensign Ludlow's Macchi M-5 flying boat.

Chief Francis Edward Ormsbee, Jr., was awarded the Medal of Honor for his action on 25 September 1918

Francis Edward Ormsbee, Jr., Aviation Chief Machinist's Mate, USN

Highest rank: Chief Aviation Pilot, Permanent

Born: 30 April 1892, Providence, R.I.

Died: 24 October 1936, Ardmore, Okla.

Buried: St. Francis Cemetery, Newport, R.I.

ACMM Ormsbee was stationed at NAS Pensacola, Fla., as an enlisted aircrewman. On 25 September 1918, ACMM Ormsbee was flying with Ensign J. A. Jova in a seaplane above the bay near the air station. Ormsbee and Jova saw another seaplane spinning out of control three-quarters of a mile away, crashing into the bay. Ensign Jova landed as close to the wreck as possible, and Ormsbee jumped into the water and swam to the partially submerged wreck. He was able to partially extricate the gunner from the aircraft and hold his head above water until the station crash boat arrived on the scene. Although Ormsbee was badly cut from pulling the gunner out of the wreckage, he still persisted in diving to attempt to retrieve the pilot. Unfortunately, the pilot had already drowned before he could be removed from the aircraft.

Lieutenant Carlton B. Hutchins was awarded the Medal of Honor for his action on 2 February 1938

Carlton B. Hutchins, Lieutenant, USN (posthumous)

Highest rank: Lieutenant

Born: 12 September 1904, Albany, N.Y.

Died: 2 February 1938

Buried: Remains not recovered.

Lieutenant Hutchins was a member of VP-11, PatWing-1, based at NAS San Diego, Calif. In February 1938, PatWing-1 and PatWing-4, based at NAS Seattle, Wash., were participating in Fleet Exercise XIX, one of the largest fleet exercises to date. Hutchins' PB4Y-2 was involved in a midair collision with another squadron aircraft. He remained at the controls endeavoring to bring the damaged plane to a safe landing and to afford an opportunity for his crew to escape by parachutes. Several of the crew did manage to exit the aircraft, but Hutchins was killed in the ensuing crash.

Chief John William Finn was awarded the Medal of Honor for his action on 7 December 1941

John William Finn, Chief Petty Officer, USN

Highest rank: Lieutenant, USN

Born: 23 July 1909, Los Angeles, Calif.

Chief Finn, attached to VP-14, was ashore at NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. During the attack Finn was able to set up a 50-caliber Browning machine gun in front of the squadron parking ramp, and amid several burning squadron Catalinas, he fired the machine gun at strafing Japanese aircraft while in an exposed position. He was able to shoot down at least one of the attackers. Finn was struck repeatedly by shrapnel from the exploding aircraft and bombs but remained at his post until ordered to go to the first aid station. After his wounds were treated, he returned to the squadron area and supervised the rearming of returning aircraft.

Lieutenant Commander Bruce A. Van Voorhis was awarded the Medal of Honor for his action on 7 July 1943

Bruce Avery Van Voorhis, Lieutenant Commander, USN (posthumous)

Highest rank: Lieutenant Commander

Born: 29 January 1908, Aberdeen, Wash.

Died: 7 July 1943

Buried: Remains not recovered.

Lieutenant Commander Van Voorhis was the commanding officer of VB-102, a patrol squadron that had transitioned from PBY Catalinas to the PB4Y-1 Liberator. On 22 April 1943, VB-102 received its first combat assignment at NAB Carney Field, Guadalcanal, under the operational control of FAW-1. On 7 July 1943, Van Voorhis, and his entire crew were killed during a daytime attack on enemy positions on the island of Kapingamarangi. Official accounts of the action describe it as a long-distance bombing mission (700 miles) against enemy positions on the Japanese-occupied Greenwich Islands chain. The mission was in support of the Battle of the Solomon Islands that had commenced the day before. Van Voorhis and his crew made six low-level bombing runs against a radio station and several strafing runs against three seaplanes and shipping in the lagoon. It was reported that on his last run his aircraft was "to low and too slow" and was caught in its own bomb blast. A

Japanese account found after the war, however, stated the bomber was shot down by 3 F1Ms (Petes) from 902nd Kokutai led by Warrant Officer Tokio Uchimura, IJN. Van Voorhis' PB4Y-1 crashed in the lagoon with no survivors. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for this action and his copilot, Lieutenant (jg) Herschel A. Oehlert, Jr. received the Navy Cross. All of the other crewmembers were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Lieutenant (jg) Nathan Green Gordon was awarded the Medal of Honor for his action on 15 February 1944

Nathan Green Gordon, Lieutenant (jg), USN
Highest rank: Lieutenant Commander, USN
Born: 4 September 1916, Morrilton, Arkansas

Lieutenant (jg) Nathan G. Gordon and his crew were members of the Samarai Detachment of VP-34, and were assigned to provide air-sea rescue support to

the Army Air Force for an attack on the enemy-held Kavieng Harbor, New Ireland. On 15 February 1944, he was alerted to a downed pilot off Vitu Island. Upon arrival over Kavieng Harbor, the crew noted that the downed Army pilot was within range of Japanese small arms fire from shore. Gordon quickly landed and taxied to the pilot. Almost immediately, his crew spotted several others nearby. He made two more landings, under fire from the Japanese, retrieving nine men, several of them injured. After taking off and setting course for home, he was informed of another group in a rubber raft in the harbor. Once again, he returned and landed under heavy enemy fire, retrieving six more survivors. Now overloaded with 15 rescued personnel, he managed to takeoff in heavy swells, his fourth takeoff of the day. After this rescue he was running out of fuel and was forced to land at Wewak, New Guinea. There he unloaded the Army fliers on the tender *San Pablo* (AVP 30) before refueling and returning to Samarai. Lieutenant (jg) Gordon was awarded the Medal of Honor for his conduct and each member of his crew received the Silver Star.